GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:316
ANSWERED ON:01.12.2015
Agricultural Profession
Dhurve Smt. Jyoti;Mishra Shri Anoop;Ramachandran Shri Krishnan Narayanasamy;Tanwar Shri Kanwar Singh

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been an acute shortage of agricultural workers/labourers in the agriculture sector during each of the last three years and the current year and if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has conducted/proposed to conduct survey to assess the number of farmers/agricultural workers/labourers who have left farming/agricultural profession in the country;

(c) if so, the details and the results thereof, State-wise along with the main reasons identified for abandoning of farming by the farmers;

(d) whether there are reports of irregularities in the disbursement of compensation/relief packages to the farmers in the country, if so, the details thereof and the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard; and

(e) the efforts made by the Government for sustenance and upliftment of farmers/agricultural worker and labourers engaged in the agriculture sector and for attracting labourers to agricultural sector?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

???? ??? ????? ?????? ???????? ??? ????? ?????? (SHRI MOHANBHAI KUNDARIA)

(a) to (c): As per Census 2011, the total number of agricultural workers in the country, comprising of cultivators and agricultural labourers, have increased from 234.1 million (127.3 million cultivators and 106.8 million agricultural labourers) in 2001 to 263.1 million(118.8 million cultivators and 144.3 million agricultural labourers) in 2011. State/UT-wise number of agricultural workers is given in Annexure-I.

In order to supplement their income, farmers particularly, small and marginal farmers, often engage in non-farm activities in the rural sector under schemes like Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). A study on implementation of MGNREGA has shown that the scheme has put competing demand on labour market in the rural sector causing a temporary shortage of labour for agricultural operations, particularly, during the peak seasons of sowing and harvesting.

Contdâ€¦2/-

(d): State Governments are empowered to initiate immediate relief actions in the wake of natural calamities. Government of India supplements the efforts of state government with financial assistance. For undertaking relief measures, funds are available with the State Government under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). Additional financial assistance, over and above SDRF, is considered from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for natural calamities of severe nature and is approved on the basis of Memorandum received from State Government in accordance with established procedure, keeping in view items and norms in vogue for assistance. A Crisis Management Group on drought has also been formed by the Government to review the situation with representatives of all the line Departments, as and when warranted.

(e): Government has taken several steps to increase the profitability and employment opportunities in the agriculture sector by improving farm practices, increasing investment, creating rural infrastructure, increasing coverage under protective irrigation, enhancement of minimum support prices of agricultural commodities, forging appropriate backward and forward linkages, etc.

Furthermore, in order to attract farmers/workers to the agriculture sector a new central scheme, Attracting Rural Youth in Agriculture (ARYA) has been introduced by the Government. It aims to operate through selected Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in the country and envisages supporting and guiding rural youth towards income generating technologies, services and enterprises, which are essentially required in the villages.